

The Christian News-Letter

Edited by
J. H. OLDHAM

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DEAR MEMBER,

You all doubtless already know of the United Aid to China Fund inaugurated by a broadcast talk by its President, Lady Cripps, a service in St. Paul's Cathedral, an influentially signed letter to *The Times*, and a meeting at the Mansion House. The question is whether we have yet done everything we can to help. There are the strongest reasons for doing our best.

THE APPEAL OF CHINA

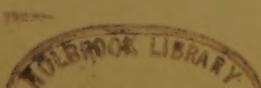
First, there are the motives of gratitude and sympathy. The Chinese people are now in their sixth year of war; they have suffered its horrors for a longer period than the western nations. If China had not resisted, the naval, military and air strength of Japan would have been intact when it attacked the United Nations, and it would have been able to draw on the territory, man-power and resources of China for the struggle. The entry of America and Great Britain into the war in the Far East has brought China allies, but no immediate relief. On the contrary, her needs have become greater. Until the beginning of this year China was receiving more than £3,000,000 a year for relief work from generous contributions from the Chinese in Hong Kong, Malaya, the Philippines and the Netherland East Indies. Whatever is sent from this country can make up for only a small fraction of this loss.

Secondly, there are the possibilities for the future latent in the association of the western democracies with the far more ancient civilization of China in defence of human values which have struck deep roots in the life of both. Out of that association new bonds of understanding, sympathy and friendship may be forged. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in his sermon in St. Paul's Cathedral, reminded us of what the Chinese people have to give to the world.

"To all who know her history China is an object of veneration. She had achieved a civilization of high order when our ancestors were wild barbarians. She has learnt the secret of partnership with nature and fellowship among men as hardly any other people under heaven has learnt it. In her tradition of reverence for former members of each family she supplies to each growing generation a sense of partnership with those who have gone before and with those who shall come after which is among the surest of all foundations for social stability. Her outstanding virtues of constancy, honesty and patience render her immune to many of the shocks that have shattered other societies. She has maintained in her long isolation from the world a peaceful dignity and unruffled wisdom which rebuke our restless avarice and our hasty superficialities. The great art of China has for centuries offered the most revealing symbols of the calm of eternity which human genius has contrived. Before that age-long culture—so sure in its foundation, so pervasive in its influence—we offer the homage of heart-felt veneration."

Thirdly, for those of us who are Christians there is the bond of a common faith with the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, to whom contributions to the Fund will be sent for distribution in China.

In an address to the nation from Hankow on Easter Eve, 1938, General Chiang Kai-Shek told his fellow-countrymen that "the spirit of Jesus is constructive, sacrificial,



holy, true, peaceable, forward-looking, full of eager striving," and urged them to "hold to Jesus as the goal for human living, and keep the mind of Jesus as our mind, the life of Jesus as our life."

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek is one of three remarkable sisters in a Chinese Christian family, all of whom have become famous through their own outstanding gifts and activities and through their marriage to distinguished leaders of the new China. The eldest married Dr. H. H. Kung, who has taken a leading part in the industrial development of China and has held the posts of Minister of Industry, Finance Minister and Prime Minister in the Government of China. The second sister married Dr. Sun Yat Sen. The third is Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. There is no room to tell the story of her tireless activities—beginning with the schools started soon after her marriage, the formation of a Moral Endeavour Association for officers, her co-operation with her husband in the New Life Movement, her organization of the women of China to meet the trials of war, her scheme of relief for refugees and war orphans and for the training of teachers to look after them, her services in the promotion of aviation, her part in establishing industrial co-operatives, and her labours in making the cause of China known abroad. The remarkable story of the three sisters is told in full in a volume published this year, *The Soong Sisters*,¹ by Emily Hahn.

The purposes for which the Fund will be used include hospitals, institutions for disabled soldiers, orphanages, industrial co-operatives and the refugee universities and schools. A brief account of the latter has already been given in the News-Letter (C.N.L. No. 109).

The aim is to secure within the three months ending on October 10th, which is the 31st anniversary of the establishment of the Chinese Republic, a gift from every person, Church, school, factory, firm, Rotary Club and other similar organizations, so that the contributions sent to China will be a gift from the whole British people. In view of the widespread and growing interest, the Fund may possibly be kept open till the end of the year.

The broadcast by Lady Cripps brought in £35,000 from nearly 15,000 persons. With a special gift of £25,000 from the Red Cross, the Fund now exceeds £90,000, and £50,000 has already been put at Madame Chiang Kai-Shek's disposal.

Further information can be obtained from the United Aid to China Fund, 13 Regent Street, London, S.W. 1. Subscriptions should be sent to Lady Cripps at the same address.

DR. HENDRIK KRAEMER

News has reached this country that Dr. Hendrik Kraemer in Holland has been sent to a concentration camp. This follows on the arrest and internment of other leaders of the Dutch Church. No fewer than seventy pastors are now interned.² Dr. Kraemer, like Dr. Albert Schweitzer, is one of the outstanding missionaries of our time. He prepared himself by prolonged studies to go to the Netherlands East Indies under the Dutch Bible Society. He speaks fluently Dutch, English, French, German, Javanese and Malay. He quickly became one of the leading authorities on the peoples, religions and languages of the Malay Archipelago, and his advice was frequently sought by the Government and by missionaries working in other fields. After twenty years of service abroad he was appointed Professor of the History of Religions in Leiden University. He took a leading part in the Jerusalem Missionary Conference in 1928, the Conference on Church, Community and State at Oxford in 1937, and in the Conference at Madras in 1938, and has many friends in this and many other countries. During the war he has been the active chairman of a Committee on the spiritual life of the Church in Holland. His

¹ Robert Hale, 102 Great Russell Street, London, W.C. 1. 15s.

² They have sent from their captivity as a message to other Churches Philippians i. 12-14 and 2 Thessalonians iii. 1, 2.

wife is in very poor health. We owe it to him and other suffering Christians in Holland to remember them in our prayers.

The following passage in an article written by Dr. Kraemer a few months ago reflects an experience that has entered deeply into the life of many of the Churches on the Continent of Europe :—

“ In and through the events of our time God has begun a serious conversation with the world, with our people, and especially with the Churches including our own Church. The Churches must answer that initiative of God. They are in a difficult position. The time when they could live without interference or opposition has passed. They have to fight for their place and existence. In many cases they have become underground Churches or Churches under the Cross. It is impossible to give an adequate idea of the spiritual and physical suffering that statement implies. Nor is it possible to describe the mystery of divine and victorious joy by which this suffering is again and again transformed. . . . One cannot think of anything more disastrous than that a Church should emerge from this present period without having been changed.”

ENTANGLEMENT IN SIN

Replies from two of those to whom I submitted a draft of what I wrote a fortnight ago about the policy of bombing reached me after the News-Letter had gone to press. Both the writers are laymen. The first letter says :—

“ While I am in agreement with what is said, I am extremely doubtful about the desirability of raising the subject at all, unless it can be discussed at a profounder level than that at which the minds of most people move. The difficulty is that, if one avoids yielding points to the obstinate pacifist, one is in danger of reassuring people too much. The difficult problem to present, in short, is that of what one might call the necessity of sin. That is to say, that we have got into the position—indeed, that humanity is chronically more or less deeply in the position—in which it is necessary to do what is wrong. If the majority of Christians who agree that this bombing is necessary, or that the probability of its necessity is strong enough to determine action, could consent to the action and at the same time feel the necessity for penitence and reparation, it might very much ameliorate the post-war attitude; but for the majority the question is seen simply as one of right or wrong, and, if it is right, then they imagine that our consciences should be clear. But sin and penitence are, I suspect, for most people hardly more than verbal flourishes.”

The writer of the second letter, after arguing that the soldier’s job is essentially the performance of duty, and is not necessarily inspired by hatred of the enemy, however much men may succumb to hatred in practice, continues as follows :—

“ We all know very well that the soldier who executes at last the evil that civilians have collectively introduced into the world is the less, not the more, in sin. For he pays the penalty; he suffers death knowingly as he inflicts it.

“ To recognize these things is not to idealize the soldier nor to idealize war. On the contrary, only by recognizing the *tragic situation* of fallen humanity, which has made war a recurring calamity to his societies, can we realize the full pathos of a *necessity* which drives men, as much by good motives as bad ones, to seek each other’s physical extinction, mass by mass, with all the attendant evils of disrupting their own societies in the process. The situation which has brought civilized man to the practice of such enormities by necessity must surely be the product of sin which is original—in the common as well as the theological sense of the word. I mean, it must be a new-fangled sin, or series of sins, of a quite remarkable inventiveness; and so it is. We have denied Christ, after His revelation to the world—which means that we have hardened our hearts and denied the tragic aspect of life, in the hope of thereby enjoying life more. But by covering over the evil within we have made it physical and external. This physical, external evil society can only strive to destroy physically, thereby intensifying it until the full price is paid in death and destruction.”

MEANINGLESSNESS IN WORK

Last week's Supplement dealt with the question of work, and insisted that work gets its meaning from the human relations that it establishes and the social good that it serves. Just as the Supplement was going to press a letter reached me from a man whose experience in the army has brought him quite independently to an understanding of the significance of the same idea. He served for a time as a clerk. He writes as follows:—

"The exasperated nerves of an office-worker are, I believe, due to the fact that this 'accounting for every detail'—of which office work mostly consists—is a fundamental misuse of the mind. Its worst consequence is that it diverts attention from the human being as the source of all labour and effort, and concentrates the mind upon material objects as represented by figures. There is, therefore, a deterioration in leadership and ultimately, as a result of declining inspiration, a reduction in work done and things produced. What happens in most offices, in the long run, is that the mind becomes occupied in various forms of faking—a great deal of work is done, continuous activity may be observed, but the greater part of it is useless. I am inclined to believe that the loss of spirit and faith in all departments of life results in an enormous increase in monotonous labour; the wages of sin is work (and of a kind that is death for the soul). Our leaders have to take upon themselves a gigantic burden of labour because they have not the genius or the courage to delegate their tasks to others. If there existed in military units a *real spirit of love*, the leaders could understand what other ranks were capable of doing, what latent powers they possessed, how easily their enthusiasm could be aroused. But the power of co-operating in this Christian way has been lost, and a caste system spreads apathy, hatred and dissatisfaction."

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

More than 1,500 subscriptions will fall due with the issue of October 21st (No. 156), which completes our third year. As last year, we are sending renewal notices several weeks in advance to lessen the strain on our staff. Some of you will find a reminder form enclosed and others will receive it during the next few weeks. You will help us by renewing your subscription within a week of receiving the renewal form. We have plans for a forward move, about which we shall be telling you shortly. Renewal of your support at this stage will greatly encourage us.

Yours sincerely,

J. H. Oldham

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Christianity and Crisis—American fortnightly journal of Christian opinion. Editor, Reinhold Niebuhr. Orders should be sent to the Christian News-Letter office. The subscription rate is 8s. for one year.

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